

Summary of Current **Commercial** Fish Regulations in Delaware for 2012

THIS TABLE IS ONLY A SUMMARY, DEPARTMENT REGULATIONS AND LAWS PREVAIL - Changes from 2011, whether tentative or final, are in red.

Species	Commercial Min. Size Limit	Commercial Season	Special Conditions / Comments
American Eel	6"	Open Year Round	
Bass, Black Sea	11"	Open Year Round	Black Sea Bass Permits Required for Pots & Commercial Hook & Line
Bass, Striped	20" 28"	Delaware River & Bay, - Gill Nets Feb. 15-May 31 Nanticoke River – March 1 - 30 All other areas and seasons including fall gill net H&L April 1-Dec. 31 Atlantic Ocean –Feb. 15 –May 31#	Drift-net only Feb. 15 – Feb. 28, May 1 - May 31 Tags Required†††
Blue Crabs (Pot)	5" Hard; 3.5" Soft; 3" Peeler	March 1-Nov 30	Pot: DE River and Bay, Roy's Creek south of Fenwick Island Ditch
Blue Crabs (Dredge)	5" Hard; Mature Female-None	Dec 15-March 31	Dredge: DE Bay and Atlantic Ocean
Bluefish	None	Open Year Round	# and ††
Clams, Hard	1.5"	Closed Sundays, except Labor Day to Memorial Day; Area closures ##	Tong: 2500; Dredge: No limit (DE Bay only)
Conchs, Channeled	3 1/8" dia. at whorl or 6" long	Open Year Round	Dredge and/or Pot permit required
Conchs, Knobbed	3 1/2" dia. at whorl or 6" long	Open Year Round	Dredge and/or Pot permit required
Croaker, Atlantic	8"	Open Year Round	# and ††
Drum, Black	16"	Open Year Round	Max 10,000 lb /day harvest limit
Drum, Red	20-27", none > 27"	Open Year Round	5/day
Flounder, Summer	14" gill nets 18.5" all other gears	Gill net open year round unless de minimus amount is landed ### Hook & Line Closed Oct. 24 – Dec. 31	200 pounds daily limit
Flounder, Winter	12"	Open Year Round	50 pounds daily limit
Herring, River		CLOSED	River herring incl. alewife & blueback herring
Horseshoe Crabs	None	Closed Jan. 1- June 7 (No harvest Sat. and Sun. after June 7). If quota not filled, beach harvest allowed until July 31. No dredge harvest until July 1	Harvest quota 100,000 males, no females, daily reporting required
Lobster	3 3/8" minimum carapace length*; Maximum length 5 1/4" either sex	Closed Sundays	50 pot limit, no more than 100 lobsters/day except in pots; No V-notched females may be possessed
Mackerel, Spanish	14"	Open Year Round	# and ††
Oysters (dredge)	2 3/4"	Open May 9 – June 25; September 1 – December 31	(Eligibility requirements)
Sharks	None	Quota Based, closed when federal waters are closed, sandbar sharks to be closed year-round, several other species to be closed May 15-Jul. 15†	See revisions to Tidal Finfish Regulation 3541
Spot	None	Open Year Round	# and ††
Spotted Seatrout	12"	Open Year Round	# and ††
Sturgeon, Atlantic		CLOSED	
Tautog	16"	Closed May 12 – July 16 and Sept. 1-28	5 fish bag; 3 fish Apr 1 – May 11
Weakfish (Sea trout)	12" (13" Comm. H&L) **	††	100 lb per day vessel limit # and ††; 1 fish H&L limit on non-specified days May 1 – Oct 31 **
White Perch	8"	Open Year Round	# and ††
Scup	9"	Open Year Round	# and ††
Shad (American & Hickory)	None	Open Year Round	Closed Atlantic Ocean; Nanticoke River & Broad Creek
Spiny Dogfish	None	Quota based, closed when regional season closes	3,000-lb trip limit

* Carapace length measured from rear of eye socket to posterior edge of body shell.

** Weakfish minimum size is 13" for all commercial hook and line fishermen. Between May 1 and October 31, Commercial H&L allowed only 4 days/week, 1 fish limit on non-specified days.

More than 200 feet of fixed, anchored, or staked gill net is prohibited between May 10 and Sept 30, in all tidal waters of this State. Drift netting is prohibited from 0001hrs on Saturdays through 1600hrs on Sundays and legal holidays between May 10-Sept 30 (except as noted in ††); commercial gill nets shall be no less than 3 1/8 inch stretch from April 1- June 30.

See clamming closure map in Fishing Guide. Clams may be harvested on Sundays between and including Labor Day and Memorial Day.

Subject to closure if the commercial quota of approximately 7,300 pounds is exceeded

† From May 15-Jul. 15, the following shark species may not be retained: tiger, nurse, lemon, blacktip, spinner, bull, great hammerhead, scalloped hammerhead, smooth hammerhead, and silky.

†† All gill nets are prohibited in the Delaware Bay and Atlantic Ocean in 2012 on **May 1-6, 11-13, 18-20, 25-28; June 1-3, 8-10, 15-17 and 22-30.**

††† No fixed gill nets may be fished in the Delaware estuary north of Liston Point from Jan 1-May 31; no gill nets may be fished in the Nanticoke River and its tributaries or the C & D Canal and its tributaries having twine size larger than 0.28mm in diameter or with a stretch mesh > 5 1/2"